

small businesses fueling our economic recovery.

H.R. 7622 empowers SBDCs to expand workforce training resources to small employers struggling to find workers, which will, in turn, grow the skill sets of workers and the workforces of businesses.

Madam Speaker, I urge my colleagues to vote “yes,” and I yield back the balance of my time.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Madam Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 7622, “The Small Business Workforce Pipeline Act of 2022.”

This bill’s purpose is to amend the Small Business Act requirements relating to apprenticeship program assistance for small business development centers, and other purposes.

The COVID-19 pandemic has resulted in a labor shortage, that affected businesses in unimaginable ways, especially small businesses. Alarming, 23 percent of small businesses closed due to the pandemic and 20 percent of small businesses that were in their first year of operation also failed.

This is why now, more than ever, small businesses need our support by updating the laws that support them and to encourage apprenticeships.

I support this bill’s effort to establish a clear and concise plan of action for programing and other resources from which small businesses and their employees can benefit.

I am in favor of this legislation because apprenticeships are tangible opportunities for successful workplace development. They enable young workers to gain on-the job training with educational resources that deliver practical experience and skills, equipping them for future career opportunities.

This “learn as you work” style gives access to people who may not be able to pursue traditional educational routes.

Historically, apprenticeships focused on skills for a narrow range of industries that could also benefit from the academic credit and mentorship opportunities. For employers finding a hard time hiring qualified employees, apprenticeships are a direct investment that small businesses realize will successfully impact them.

Madam Speaker, this bill will provide much needed assistance to businesses and enable them to continue their good work of providing training skills that will allow opportunities for employees to succeed in the workplace. This legislation will prepare workers for the 21st century workforce, while helping businesses find the skilled employees they need to compete.

I urge all of my colleagues to join me in supporting passage of H.R. 7622.

SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentlewoman from New York (Ms. VELÁZQUEZ) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 7622.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds being in the affirmative, the yeas have it.

Mr. ROY. Madam Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to section 3(s) of House Resolution 8, the yeas and nays are ordered.

Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, further proceedings on this motion are postponed.

SUPPORTING SMALL BUSINESS AND CAREER AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION ACT OF 2022

Ms. VELÁZQUEZ. Madam Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 7664) to amend the Small Business Act to include requirements relating to graduates of career and technical education programs or programs of study for small business development centers and women’s business centers, and for other purposes.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 7664

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the “Supporting Small Business and Career and Technical Education Act of 2022”.

SEC. 2. INCLUSION OF CAREER AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION.

(a) DEFINITION.—Section 3 of the Small Business Act (15 U.S.C. 632) is amended by adding at the end the following new subsection:

“(gg) CAREER AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION.—The term ‘career and technical education’ has the meaning given the term in section 3 of the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act of 2006 (20 U.S.C. 2302).”

(b) SMALL BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT CENTERS.—Section 21(c)(3) of the Small Business Act (15 U.S.C. 648(c)(1)) is amended—

(1) in subparagraph (T), by striking “and” at the end;

(2) in clause (v) of the first subparagraph (U) (relating to succession planning), by striking the period at the end and inserting a semicolon;

(3) in second subparagraph (U) (relating to training on domestic and international intellectual property protections)—

(A) in clause (ii)(II), by striking the period at the end and inserting a semicolon; and

(B) by redesignating such subparagraph as subparagraph (V); and

(4) by adding at the end the following new subparagraphs:

“(W) assisting small businesses in hiring graduates from career and technical education programs or programs of study; and

“(X) assisting graduates of career and technical education programs or programs of study in starting up a small business concern.”

(c) WOMEN’S BUSINESS CENTERS.—Section 29(b) of the Small Business Act (15 U.S.C. 656(b)) is amended—

(1) in paragraph (2), by striking “and” at the end;

(2) in paragraph (3), by striking the period at the end and inserting a semicolon; and

(3) by adding at the end the following new paragraphs:

“(4) assistance for small business concerns to hire graduates from career and technical education programs or programs of study; and

“(5) assistance for graduates of career and technical education programs or programs of study to start up a small business concern.”

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentlewoman from New York (Ms. VELÁZQUEZ) and the gentleman from Texas (Mr. WILLIAMS) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from New York.

GENERAL LEAVE

Ms. VELÁZQUEZ. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Mem-

bers may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on the measure under consideration.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman from New York?

There was no objection.

Ms. VELÁZQUEZ. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Madam Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 7664, the Supporting Small Business and Career and Technical Education Act of 2022, introduced by my colleague from Texas (Mr. WILLIAMS) and my colleague from Illinois (Ms. NEWMAN).

After seeing massive layoffs in response to the pandemic, businesses are starting to expand their operations and grow their workforce. Unfortunately, this has created one of the tightest labor markets in U.S. history, and small firms are feeling this acutely.

Oftentimes, small businesses are not only faced with a shortage of applicants, but within that pool, they are seeing a shortage of applicants with the skill sets they need.

One of the best strategies for equipping students with skills needed to enter a market is career and technical education, or CTE. Aimed at secondary and postsecondary students, these programs don’t replace academic training but, rather, expand upon it to give young people practical skills they can use, whether they enter the workforce or continue in their studies.

CTE programs can train students with a wide variety of skills in nearly every industry, and this program often works with local businesses to understand what skills are in demand to guide the curriculum.

This legislation directs small business development centers and women’s business centers to assist small businesses in hiring graduates of CTE programs while also helping program graduates start their own businesses.

It takes a twofold approach of, one, creating a more adequate pipeline of trained young people for small businesses and, two, supporting those students who want to launch their own enterprise.

SBDCs and WBCs can help fill the gap between training programs and small firms by building awareness and fostering relationships between the private sector and our educational community.

Madam Speaker, I thank Mr. WILLIAMS and Ms. NEWMAN for their meaningful work on this bill. I urge Members to support this bipartisan piece of legislation, and I reserve the balance of my time.

□ 1630

Mr. WILLIAMS of Texas. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Madam Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 7664, the Supporting Small Business and Career and Technical

Education Act. This important piece of legislation will encourage younger generations to pursue CTE careers, knowing they will have support on the back end to help find a job.

Costly 4-year degrees create burdensome financial obligations and saddle students with decades of debt. It is important individuals have alternatives, such as CTE programs, when wanting to find meaningful careers at a fraction of the cost.

Skilled labor has become a high-demand market, and our country is in need of more plumbers, electricians, welders, and other skilled professionals who are the lifeblood of our economy. This growing skills gap is hurting small businesses across the country.

My bill will fill that void and connect graduates to high-demand occupations and opportunities that earn good wages and will help them provide for their family. Additionally, this bill provides valuable assistance so CTE graduates can translate their skills over to starting their own small business and help build long-term careers and employ more people.

I have been a small business owner for over 50 years, and I can tell you that leading sales meetings, signing the fronts of checks, and giving other people the opportunity to make a living is one of the most rewarding things, if not the most rewarding, I have ever done.

The American Dream is built on innovation and entrepreneurship, and this only continues when the next generation is willing to better themselves, be empowered to take risks, and understand that risk-reward is the dream.

It is our responsibility to unlock the potential of our next generation so we can keep America the greatest nation in the world and keep it strong.

I thank Chairwoman VELÁZQUEZ and Ranking Member LUETKEMEYER for helping to get this bill to the floor. I urge all my colleagues to vote in support of H.R. 7664.

Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. VELÁZQUEZ. Madam Speaker, I have no further speakers, and I am prepared to close. I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. WILLIAMS of Texas. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume to close.

Madam Speaker, small businesses and the American worker are the backbone of our economy. By empowering the SBA's resource partners, including small business development centers and women's business centers, to engage with the career and technical education community, we will replenish our skilled workforce and grow our economy.

Madam Speaker, I encourage my colleagues to support H.R. 7664, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Ms. VELÁZQUEZ. Madam Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time to close.

Madam Speaker, while our economy continues to recover and job openings

increase, it is important that we ensure there is an adequate pipeline of skilled workers in our small firms.

Fueling our economic recovery relies on them having the resources they need to thrive, including an adequate workforce. H.R. 7664 will go a long way in connecting small employers in need of workers to these programs and connect students to opportunities of launching their own firms.

I thank the gentleman from Texas (Mr. WILLIAMS) and the gentlewoman from Illinois (Ms. NEWMAN) for their hard work on this bill.

Madam Speaker, I urge my colleagues to vote "yes," and I yield back the balance of my time.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Madam Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 7664, the "Supporting Small Business and Career and Technical Education Act of 2022."

This bill would amend the Small Business Act to include requirements relating to graduates of career and technical education programs, and programs of study for small business development centers and women's business centers.

H.R. 7664 would assist small businesses in hiring graduates from career and technical education programs, and would assist graduates of these programs in starting up a small business.

Small businesses are the engine of our economy, creating two-thirds of the new jobs over the last 15 years, accounting for 44 percent of U.S. economic activity.

According to the U.S. Small Business Association (SBA), small businesses of 500 employees or fewer make up 99.9 percent of all U.S. businesses and 99.7 percent of firms with paid employees.

Not only do small businesses provide millions of jobs, they also advance careers and opportunities.

Successful small businesses put money back into their local community through paychecks and taxes, which can support the creation of new small businesses and improve local public services.

Small business is the portal through which many people enter the economic mainstream.

Business ownership allows individuals, including women and minorities, to achieve financial success, as well as bolster pride in their accomplishments.

While most small businesses are still owned by white males, the past two decades have seen a substantial increase in the number of businesses owned by women and minorities.

The more we create opportunities for career growth and development from a wide array of diverse backgrounds, the more opportunities we create for ourselves and our economy.

A critical workforce challenge currently in the United States is the skills gap, particularly among jobs that require either a high school diploma, postsecondary certificate, or associate's degree.

Jobs requiring these "middle skills" outnumber the adults in the workforce who possess them, and this gap presents a barrier to American economic competitiveness.

Due to global shifts in technology, automation and other sectors that had been occurring long before the pandemic, employers were raising alarms over a growing number of vital skills they noticed to be in short supply from incoming applicants.

Graduates from career and technical education (CTE) programs are perfectly suited to fill this gap.

CTE programs help students see the relevance of their studies for their future and motivates them to attend classes and study hard.

In 2019–20 there were 11.1 million CTE participants; 7.6 million at the secondary level and 3.5 million at the postsecondary level.

According to the Texas Education Agency's 2016–2017 Academic Excellence Indicator System State Profile Report, 1,523,779 secondary students in Texas (46.3 percent) were enrolled in Career and Technical Education programs.

We must make sure our legislation reflects the importance and value of small business, CTE program graduates, and the role they will play in growing our economy.

I urge all my colleagues to support H.R. 7664, the Supporting Small Business and Career and Technical Education Act of 2022.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentlewoman from New York (Ms. VELÁZQUEZ) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 7664.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds being in the affirmative, the ayes have it.

Mr. ROY. Madam Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to section 3(s) of House Resolution 8, the yeas and nays are ordered.

Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, further proceedings on this motion are postponed.

WOMEN-OWNED SMALL BUSINESS PROGRAM TRANSPARENCY ACT

Ms. VELÁZQUEZ. Madam Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 7670) to amend the Small Business Act to require a report on small business concerns owned and controlled by women, and for other purposes.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 7670

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "Women-Owned Small Business Program Transparency Act" or the "WOSB Program Transparency Act".

SEC. 2. REPORT ON SMALL BUSINESS CONCERNS OWNED AND CONTROLLED BY WOMEN.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 8(m) of the Small Business Act (15 U.S.C. 637(m)) is amended by adding at the end the following new paragraph:

"(9) REPORT.—Not later than May 1, 2023, and annually thereafter, the Administrator shall submit to the Committee on Small Business of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship of the Senate a report on small business concerns owned and controlled by women. Such report shall include, for the fiscal year preceding the date of the report, the following:

"(A) The total number of concerns certified as small business concerns owned and